

pass on to the study of objects and their properties as they appear to us—that is, of phenomena.

Philosophy, on the other hand, would fain pursue the questions which this view of the relativity of our knowledge opens out to us. If all we know directly about an object consists in the sensations which it excites in us, have we any valid ground for believing in the existence of anything which is not a sensation, as a substratum or hidden cause of sensations? Are we justified in saying that "Things in themselves" really exist, and that whenever there is an impression produced on our senses from without, there is a "Thing in itself" which is behind the phenomenon and a cause of it? Can we know anything about this Thing in itself, beyond the bare fact of its existence? Do the attributes which we ascribe to outward things contain any other element besides sensations and an unknown cause of sensations? Are the attributes of filling a portion of space, and occupying a portion of time, properties of our senses, or of the unknown thing in itself, or do they result from the nature and structure of our mind? If we see a thing in a place, is it because the Noumenon, or Thing in itself, is in a place, or because it is a law of our perceptive faculty that we must see in some place whatever we see at all? Or is it possible that our ideas of Space and Time, Substance, Cause, and the rest, are put together out of ideas of sensation by the known laws of association? These are some of the chief questions in relation to the external world with which Philosophy has attempted to deal. We cannot deny their interest and importance, but considering that similar questions have been put forward ever since the first beginnings of Philosophy, that the answers given to them have been very various, and that philosophers are not yet agreed as to their truth, it is not surprising that some should regard them as unanswerable, and urge that it is time to abandon a profitless inquiry. Among the few conclusions of Philosophy which may be regarded as almost universally accepted is this of the relativity of our knowledge, and if the statement that all our knowledge is relative is really equivalent to the